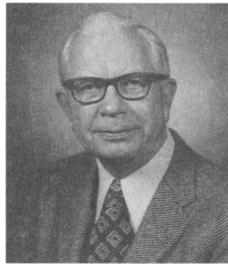


## OBITUARY

### Thomas Edward Keys, 1908–1995



Thomas E. Keys, former director of the Mayo Medical Libraries, died on October 11, 1995, at Saint Marys Hospital, Mayo Medical Center, Rochester, Minnesota.

Survivors include his wife, Elizabeth, of Rochester; a son, Thomas Frederick, of Cleveland, Ohio; two grandchildren; and two sisters, Margaret Stepp, of Loveland, Colorado, and Katherine Morissette, of Red Feather Lakes, Colorado. He was preceded in death by a son.

On the occasion of my appointment to succeed Tom Keys as director of the Mayo Medical Libraries, he wrote suggesting hope for a relationship between us which might be similar in nature to a facet of Doctor W.J. Mayo's philosophy expressed as "Take of my experiences, but give me of your dreams." This, indeed, came to pass, for we had a most rewarding and friendly association for the next twenty-five years. Sharing experiences is a vital factor in deepening one's appreciation for a person. Over these years I had many delightful adventures with Tom. We traveled extensively to most of the major cities of the United States and Canada, attending professional meetings and encountering many interesting physicians, historians, librarians, book people, collectors, publishers, and others.

Tom and his wife Betty were pleasant hosts. To visit or dine with them as their guest was to enjoy an intellectually stimulating and socially enjoyable occasion. Especially memorable was to share in the enjoyment of their Skyline Drive Frank Lloyd Wright-designed home. There was the first of several Wright-designed homes in Roches-

ter. The Keys for many years enjoyed a fairly close relationship with the architect.

Thomas Keys, born December 2, 1908, in Greenville, Mississippi, received his bachelor's degree in 1931 from Beloit College (Beloit, Wisconsin) and his master's degree from the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago in 1934. His first appointment was as assistant librarian of the Mayo Clinic. He was appointed reference librarian in 1935, a post he held until 1942, when he was granted a leave of absence to become librarian in charge of rare books of the Army Medical Library in Cleveland, Ohio. He discharged the duties of this post with distinction and was awarded the Army Commendation Ribbon by the army surgeon general. He was promoted through the grades from first lieutenant to lieutenant colonel.

Returning to the Mayo Clinic as Librarian in 1946, Keys continued in that capacity until early 1970, when he relinquished administrative responsibilities and was appointed a senior consultant. He retired and joined the emeritus staff in December of 1972. He was named assistant professor of the history of medicine of the Mayo Graduate School of Medicine in 1957, was advanced to associate professor in 1963, and became a professor in 1969. Keys was appointed by President Eisenhower to the Board of Regents of the National Library of Medicine, and served from 1959 to 1962.

During his years as Librarian of the Mayo Clinic, the collections were greatly expanded. During World War II, for instance, it was recognized in Washington, DC and elsewhere that the clinic's holdings of Russian periodical medical literature were the largest in the United States. The impressive Mayo

History of Medicine and Rare Book Library resulted almost entirely from the unceasing efforts of Keys. Holdings include valuable editions of the works of most of the great names of medicine, and number more than 20,000 monographs, atlases, reference works, and journals. He stimulated an abiding interest in medical history, which has persisted at the Mayo Clinic and Mayo Foundation, and he is the author or co-author of a number of volumes on the history of medicine.

On April 17, 1972, Keys was awarded the honorary degree of doctor of science by Beloit College, the citation reading in part, "Your lifelong commitment to excellence and innovation in your chosen career has helped in large part to create one of the world's greatest medical libraries and has won for you national distinction in the library profession." When Tom Keys became president of the Medical Library Association in 1957, one of his colleagues, W.B. McDaniel, said of him "... to the present, his footsteps have not deviated from the primrose path of librarianship. With like restraint, and good fortune, he has needed but two libraries ... as theatres of operation. If they happened to be good ones, he has made them better."

Persistently active in professional association activities, Keys served as president of the Medical Library Association (1957–1958), and in 1966 was the recipient of the Marcia Noyes Award for "Outstanding Achievement in Medical Librarianship" (the highest award a medical librarian can receive from his colleagues). He was also a member of many societies related to his work; he was especially proud of being a charter member of the American Osler Society, an honorary member of the American Society of Anesthesiologists, and a corresponding

member of the Swedish Medical Association Section on Medical History.

Keys was editor of the *Bulletin of the Medical Library Association* from 1942 to 1945; served on the editorial board of Blakiston's *New Gould Medical Dictionary* in 1949; was compiler of *Cardiac Classics* in 1941; was editor of *Foundations in Anesthesiology* in 1965; and was author of several books, including *The Development of Anesthesia* in 1943, *The History of Surgical Anesthesia* in

1945, and *Applied Medical Library Practice* in 1958. There are more than 150 citations in his bibliography of publications. Among these are a number of books and articles that we were able to do together. He also lectured extensively in the United States, the Far East, and Europe.

Tom Keys gave service of heart and mind to the Mayo Clinic Library; exemplified professional achievement with worthy accomplishments; and demonstrated con-

fidence in his abilities and those of his associates. Medical librarianship and the libraries at the Mayo Foundation are the better for Tom Keys having passed this way. I miss our times together!

Jack D. Key  
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Mayo Medical Center Libraries  
Rochester, Minnesota  
Professor Emeritus of Biomedical Communications  
Mayo Medical School  
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